

New Shoreham Deer Task Force
Wednesday, November 3, 2010
Town Hall, Old Town Road
7:30 p.m.

Members Present: Becky Ballard, Chris Blane, Chris Blansfield, Paul Deane, Pat Doyle, George Mellor, Maggie Komosinski, Mary Sue Record, Bill Wilson Also present: Kim Gaffett

The meeting was called to order by Mary Sue at 7:34 p.m.

1. Public Input Bill distributed
copies of a question that he unsuccessfully submitted for consideration at the recent Candidates Forum:

“In localities where deer have been nearly eliminated, Lyme disease has also been nearly eliminated. However, modest reduction in herd size has no large or permanent effect on the frequency of disease. Given these facts, if the ongoing attempts to reduce Lyme disease on BI do not succeed, will you support efforts to obtain local control of hunting so that methods that have been safely and successfully used elsewhere can be used here to produce enough of a reduction of our herd to decrease the frequency of disease? “

2. Minutes of Oct. 19, 2010

It was moved, seconded, and carried (George, Maggie, unanimous) to approve the minutes of October 19, 2010

3. Pre-payment for deer tags

There was discussion of the request that some procedure be adopted so that hunters would not have to outlay so much money to buy deer tags. Private loans by DTF members, or funds from an anonymous donor were considered.

A motion was made by Mary Sue Record and seconded by Bill Wilson that any hunter who wishes an advance toward the cost of deer tags make a request to George Mellor, Treasure, BIRA, Box 904, for a loan not to exceed \$325, to be repaid by April 1, 2011.

Ayes 7 (Record, Wilson, Mellor, Komosinski, Ballard, Doyle)

Nays 1 (Blansfield)

Abstain 1 (Deane)

4. There was some discussion concerning the possibility of bounty payments, including the requirements for deer-damage permits, but no action was taken.

5. Chris Blane reported on a conversation with the Police Chief

- a. It would be possible to adopt a system in which hunters would have to check-in and check-out (in person at the police station or by phone) when hunting on private property. Mary Sue moved that such a procedure be put into effect, but the motion died for the lack of a second.

- b. The chief reaffirmed that there would be “zero tolerance” for violations of hunting laws. This means that any perpetrator would be prosecuted to the full extent of the law, but it does not mean that anyone so accused could be summarily prohibited from hunting.

6. Mary Sue reported that permission to hunt on Boy Scout lands would not be forthcoming, because their lawyer would “not be comfortable” considering their possible liability in the case of injury as a result of hunting activity. The fact that all the “conservation organizations” had reached the same conclusion was noted.

A motion was made by Mary Sue Record and seconded by George Mellor, that the DTF requests of the Town Council that they ask our state legislators to address the issue of liability (of a private land-owner, a semi-public body, or an easement holder) as it pertains to hunting under the provisions of RIGL 32-6.
Ayes 9 (Record, Mellor, Wilson, Blansfield, Blane, Deane, Komosinki, Ballard, Doyle)

7. Mary Sue reminded members that the DTF was appointed for a term of one year in November 2009. She asked members to send her their individual suggestions about the possible future of such a body—by e-mail, with a copy to Bonny Ryan.

8. Bill reported on communications from Durland Fish, and Bill and George reported on a meeting with Peter Krause. Their CDC grant to study changes in the prevalence of Lyme disease in relation to changes in the size of the deer herd was funded, in the amount of approximately \$100,000. Their plans include forward-looking infrared aerial counts of the size of the herd, tentatively by four flights in March, 2011, to be provided by Vision Air Research at a cost of \$5000 per flight. Some modest amount of money might be available for relevant expenses of the DTF.

It was the sense of the DTF that Bill should ask Durland Fish to inform Cathy Sparks of the DEM about this additional source of information about the size of the herd. Furthermore, it was decided that further consideration of how DTF might use funds as offered would be discussed at the next meeting.

Bill and George reported that Peter Krause agreed to try to work with the Medical Center to decide on a consistent format for reporting the number of cases of Lyme disease each year. Bill was asked to point out to Dr. Krause the importance to their research of having a reliable and valid measure of the incidence of the disease.

9. Hunting book

It was noted that Becky and Paul have been working on assembling a list of hunters that might be included in the binder (of available properties, etc.) that is to be kept at Town Hall. There was discussion of the difficulty in determining which hunters should be included in such a list.

A motion was made by Mary Sue Record, seconded by Pat Doyle that a notice be placed in the hunting binder that any landowner interested in finding a hunter should make a request via e-mail to deertaskforce@gmail.com. It was agreed that copies of the list as tentatively assembled should be sent to members of the DTF and the matter be considered further at the next meeting.

Ayes 9 (Record, Mellor, Wilson, Blansfield, Blane, Deane, Komosinki, Ballard, Doyle)

10. At 9:06 p.m. a motion was made and seconded to adjourn and voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,